

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 17 May 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor L Bridges,  
Professor S Bruzzi,  
Professor A Caesar,  
Professor R Higgott,  
Professor C Hughes,  
Professor K Lamberts,  
Professor M Taylor,  
Professor M Whitby,  
Professor P Winstanley,  
Mr A Bradley.

Apologies: Professor M Smith

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Professor S Palmer, Director of Estates, Finance Director, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Assistant Registrar (DRO), Director of HR (for item 523/09-10), Director of Research Support Services (for item 524/09-10), Director of IT Services (for item 525/09-10).

520/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2010 be approved.

521/09-10 Trust Membership with Pudsey Grandfield School (minute 479/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the Institute of Education remained keen on a link with Pudsey Grandfield School in Leeds, noting that the School had contacted the University to outline the Trust partners that they had secured to date.

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to the Institute of Education to pursue a link with Pudsey Grandfield School.

522/09-10 New Government

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced that any contract that had been signed with the government since 1 January 2010 was subject to review.
- (b) That although the full implications of this remained unclear, there was particular potential risk for the University with regard to the Quantum Technology Partnership, IIPSI and the Science City funding relating to the Advanced Materials 3 contract.
- (c) That it was anticipated that there may be a further £400m cut in HEFCE funding for 2010/11 announced in the forthcoming Emergency Budget, which may equate to a £4m cut for the University.

- (d) That it was also anticipated that there would be a £200m cut in Research Council funding in the Emergency Budget.
- (e) That the Coalition Agreement made provision for the Liberal Democrats to abstain on a future vote on Tuition Fees.

523/09-10

Results of the Pulse Survey

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of HR updating the Steering Committee on the results of the 2010 Pulse Staff Survey (SC.354/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of HR)

- (a) That the results of the survey, which saw only 4 of the 73 questions asked showing improved scores for 2010 compared to 2009, appeared to reflect the current climate of change both internally and externally to the University.
- (b) That response rate had increased to 62% in 2010 from 61% in 2009.
- (c) That the key themes arising from the survey indicated that the University should give particular focus to:
  - (i) the management of change
  - (ii) further development of leadership skills
  - (iii) career development
  - (iv) communications
- (d) That the results of the survey would be communicated to the wider University from 24 May 2010.
- (e) That a Pulse Action Team would be established to take forward a targeted and focused plan of University-wide actions, noting that ranking by faculty and department was also available.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience))

- (f) That the National Student Survey had also indicated that survey respondents often retained doubts that the findings were acted upon, and that the clear communication of such actions was important.
- (g) That the decrease in proportion of respondents who saw the University as offering equal opportunities for all staff was puzzling, and that this would need to be investigated further.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (h) That the low percentage of respondents who saw senior managers of the University as 'open and honest' was concerning, noting that it was unclear who respondents identified those senior managers to be.
- (i) That some of the issues implied within the results would be tackled through the implementation of the recommendations of the Harris Report.

(by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (j) That Harvard had developed a web resource intended to enable communication in what was a disparate organisation, and that consideration should be given to any relevant findings from the work they had undertaken in this area.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the Pulse Staff Survey 2010 results be approved as set out in SC.354/09-10, noting that further consideration would be given to nominations for colleagues to be members of the Pulse Action Group.

524/09-10

Research Strategy Update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research {Arts and Social Studies}), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Research Support Services updating on developments including the progress of the Science City Initiative, Advantage West Midlands funding, large and strategic proposals, RSS operational matters, Fellowships and research income generation (SC.351/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research {Arts and Social Studies}))

- (a) That the University had recently secured two British Academy Post-Doctoral Awards (one in History and one in French), worth in the region of £440,000 in total, noting that only 45 awards were made from 900 applications.
- (b) That the University was on course to achieve research income of £90m by the end of the year.
- (c) That one potential significant implication of the change in Government was that AWM money may in future be allocated by City and County Councils.
- (d) That the Research Committee, in conjunction with the Head of Governance Support Services, had begun considerations around the potential implications of relevant Harris Report recommendations.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (e) That the University should give further consideration to the development of an institutional knowledge transfer strategy in order to provide clarity and consistency to future bids.

RESOLVED:

That, as a matter of course, an update on industrial funding be added to future iterations of the Research Strategy Update.

525/09-10

IT Services Update

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of IT Services updating on developments including core services, service improvements and developments, new services and major projects (SC.353/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That it had been noticeable that, over time, IT services in the University had become more reliable and consistent, noting that this reduced the need for any independent departmental IT provision within the University.

526/09-10

Universities Week Update

RECEIVED:

Correspondence from UUK concerning the forthcoming Universities Week, to be held between 14-20 June 2010 (SC.350/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That it was important that the University should be seen to be committed to the inaugural Universities week.

(by the Director of Development, Communications and Strategy)

(b) That the University would look to promote existing activity taking place during the week, where appropriate to do so.

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/May10/17May10